

REMARKS

Summary of the Office Action

Claims 1, 9 and 12 remain rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by *Sato et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 4,623,216).

The Examiner is thanked for indicating that claims 2-4 include allowable subject matter.

Summary of the Response to the Office Action

Applicants have canceled claims 1, 9 and 12 without prejudice or disclaimer. Also, claims 2-4 have been rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, claims 2-4 remain pending for further consideration with claims 5-8, 10 and 11 being withdrawn from consideration.

The Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

Claims 1, 9 and 12 remain rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by *Sato et al.* Applicants have canceled claims 1, 9 and 12 without prejudice or disclaimer, and therefore, the rejection of claims 1, 9 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) are moot. Withdrawal of the rejection of independent claims 1, 9 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) is thus respectfully requested. Further, Applicants have rewritten objected-to claims 2-4 in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 2-4, as newly-amended, are in condition for allowance at least because of the Office Action's indication of allowable subject matter.

With no other rejection pending, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 2-4 are in condition for allowance.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request the entry of this Amendment to place the application in clear condition for allowance or, in the alternative, in better form for appeal. Applicants also respectfully request the Examiner's reconsideration and reexamination of the application and the timely allowance of the pending claims. Should the Examiner feel that there are any issues outstanding after consideration of this response, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative to expedite prosecution.

If there are any other fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-0310. If a fee is required for an extension of time under

37 C.F.R. § 1.136 not accounted for above, such extension is requested and the fee should also be charged to our Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

MORGAN, LEWIS & BOCKIUS LLP

By: Mary Jane Boswell
Mary Jane Boswell
Reg. No. 33,652

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Customer No.: 009629
MORGAN, LEWIS & BOCKIUS LLP
1111 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20004
Telephone: 202.739.3000
Facsimile: 202.739.3001